



To: TUI Second Level Workplace Representatives/Branch Secretaries/Branch Chairpersons/Executive Committee

5th March 2020

**Advice to TUI Members
regarding DES Circular 17/2020 - Junior Cycle SLAR Meetings**

Dear Colleagues,

Circular Letter 17/2020 was issued recently by the Department of Education and Skills. It provides 4 options for arranging SLAR Meetings. Attached is a poster with advice for TUI members.

We strongly advise members to choose Option A or Option B. Both of these options are fully compliant with the terms of the Junior Cycle Agreement – Joint Statement on Principles and Implementation (May 2015) and Appendix to the Joint Statement (July 2015). Any suggestion that these options do not comply with the agreement is simply wrong. These options describe, moreover, what you are already doing.

Option C is also compliant with the 2015 agreement but it is much more awkward to arrange, involves more work than is necessary and is invested with a lesser level of trust in the teacher.

Option D has nothing at all to recommend it. It is hugely impracticable and involves the loss of jobs and income for members. However, it is a reminder that the time for SLAR meetings has already been paid for by the state – by way of professional time – and that the state will not pay on the double by providing substitution as well. The 2015 agreement is clear in this regard – a proportion of the 22-hours of professional time (40-minutes per week) is used for SLAR meetings. The 2015 agreement is also clear in protecting the 28-hours of tuition time per week for students.

In your school you should seek a consensus for Option A or Option B. If a consensus is not reached, the Board of Management decides on the option to be used. In such circumstances, TUI members and the TUI workplace committee should formally ask the Board of Management to nominate Option A or Option B. We in TUI have made an agreement in relation to Junior Cycle and have honoured that agreement. There is no reason to veer from that path.

Any arrangement for SLAR meetings that involves the use of substitution will cost our new entrant colleagues hours and income. That would be unconscionable. Therefore, keep faith with the agreement we made, act in solidarity with our new entrant and part-time colleagues, respect the right of our students to 28-hours of tuition time and make the professional choice by choosing Option A or Option B.

Yours sincerely,

Seamus Lahart
President

John MacGabhann
General Secretary